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The MESSAGE *of* The Flag

And
SUNDRY
OTHER
RHYMES

By
W. H. WALSH

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I AM the Flag that waves for you,
I am your largest dreams come true,
Thou weakest man of all that work;
Thou daring soul who'll never shirk.
The Constitution am I, too,
The courts and statutes I pursue,
O'er statute makers I have power,
O'er soldiers, sailors, every hour;
O'er farmer, counselor, and clerk,
O'er all who strive in Freedom's work;
O'er dreadnoughts, battleships, and fleet,
O'er merchant ships that sail the deep.
I am the victory of today,
The awful rout of yesterday.
I am the mystery of life,
The glory of the Nation's strife.
My stars and stripes are all for you,
Your hopes, your dreams, and prayers, too;
Your one best hope when danger's nigh—
Columbia's soul in truth am I.

THEY'RE registering the soldiers;
They have called for volunteers;
While from city, town and hamlet
Come the valiant grenadiers.
There is registering in the city,
In the country far away,
On the hills and in the lowlands—
Eager registering for the fray.

'Cross the broad Atlantic gazing,
Where the treacherous Germans dwell;
Where "Old Glory" 'll soon be floating
'Mid the rain of shot and shell;
Where the lustful foe is biding,
With a maddened thirst for gore
And a hate for England, riding
Rough shod, while they murder more.

'Tis no time for mediation;
We have waited now too long,
While the foe in concentration
Is forever plotting wrong;
Cutting throats of wounded soldiers,
When defenseless there they fell;
'Tis the German's mode of warfare,
Plied by fiends, fit for Hell.

By the God that rules above us!
By the souls of heroes slain!
By the flag that flutters o'er us!
By the thoughts of Lusitan'!
We'll avenge this gravest insult
Of a beastly, braggart crew.
Rifle, shell and battle tumult
Speed our answer quickly, too.

See, the eagle's wings are spreading;
See the message that he bears
From the Nation's Chief, undreading,
To the Kaiser's army lairs.
"Time is past for mediation.
"War it is, and war is just.
"That alone in palliation,
"For your hellish, carnal lust."

A LITTLE bit nearer day by day
A little more anxious to enter the fray;
A little less ready to "watch and wait,"
A little more care for a brother's fate;
And so we are nearing the fateful day,
When there's nothing left but war to pay.

A little less faith in perjured lips,
A little more care for our merchant ships;
A little less dread of submarines,
A little more trust in our own machines.
And so we are faring a-down the way,
Preparing at last to have our say.

A little less care for riches and gold,
A little more zeal for honor untold;
A little less selfish in thought and deed,
A little more love for all the breed.
And so we are going straight to war
With that nation whose deeds we all abhor.

A little more horror, with dying and dead,
A little less shame for those ahead;
A little more courage and love inspired,
A little less "yellow" than they desired;
And so we find that the die is cast;
That Columbia's over the brink at last.

HALT THE SLACKER

HALT the "slacker," if 'tis he
Whom no true man would wish to be;
Who hears his country loudly call,
For men to do and dare for all,
Yet recreant to the Flag is prone
To lag behind and stay at home.

Halt the "slacker" howe'er sure,
He has made his plans secure;
Or perhaps with sly pretense,
Conscience makes his sham defense,
Spare him not, the craven knave,
Traitor who himself would save,
When his country needs him most,
Coward who deserts his post.

Halt the "slacker," though his name's
Of small account, unknown to fame;
Halt him though he ranks most high,
In blood, or wealth, or destiny;
Race and creed shall have no power
To shield him in this direful hour;
If a "slacker" nought shall save
This trim stickler but the grave.

YOU dare say "We are not understood";
"We simply strive that all men may be free."
You, whose black, slimy trail of treason would
Enthrall the world, and make men look to thee;
As Russia humbled now, in shame and terror cowed,
Bows down her head to German despot's will,
But breathes a curse on you, and all your crowd,
While Teutons give the word for Turks to kill.

"Not understood"—Ah, yes; too well we know
How base your creed, how recreant your power,
For all your Bolshevika boast to show
The world how best to govern in this hour.
Unnumbered ghosts who, butchered by your zeal,
For Freedom, lie like kine along your trail,
Shall cry for vengeance. Say, can you not feel
Their hands about your throats, their ghostly flail?

Shall Freedom look to you to watch and ward,
To safeguard home, and law and sacred lore?
Shall Liberty be safe where traitors guard
Her hallowed shrine, and thieves pollute her store?
Forsooth, this world has nobler, worthier breeds
Than thou, in whom she puts her holy trust;
Columbia gives, Columbia bleeds,
But thou she spurns, dishonored, in the dust.

ROUNDING UP THE SLACKERS

THEY are rounding up the slackers,
Each one with the brand of shame;
From the heavy peaks of Cascade,
To the flowery dells of Maine.
From the Gulf States 'way down yonder,
To th' land of the Canuck;
Forced to give up peaceful chatter,
For this war they cannot "duck."
They'd assumed that wealth might answer
As it did in sixty-one;
Or that conscientious scruples
Would exempt each mother's son.
But the pincers now are closing
Much the same as "over there";
And the slackers sure are covered,
Uncle Sam is everywhere.

LAST night I dreamed that Peace—aye, Peace transcendent
Had fallen "like dew from Heaven" upon this world and War's foment.
At first it seemed a rosy light suffused the humid haze,
And blotted out all scenes of strife and battle's blaze.
I saw a city and its people all intent
On peaceful ways, and children laughing all content.
Last night I dreamed a dream of Peace, and then awoke
To find it nought, for war screamed forth, and Prussia's yoke,
With pain and sorrow, shot and shell was "over there,"
And U-boats' dread alarms came sighing thro' the darkling air:
And then once more I slept, and fancy weaved its magic spell.

Once more th' tangled threads of dreams unravel—
I saw a nation all alert for war, and soldiers too in khaki clad;
And transports speeding o'er the main, all loaded down with fighters glad
That they were chose to battle with the Hun in Freedom's cause;
So strong, exultant, brave, defenders of all nations' laws.
I saw our President stand forth, with mien impressive, eyes that flashed a menace,
And heard his thund'rous message in reply to Austria's plea for peace;
"Force, Force to the utmost, without stint or limit," so must it be,
"The righteous and triumphant force, from every selfish motive free."
I dreamed a dream of war:

Again I woke and dawn lay o'er the land, all touched with light serene,
In vision clear of days to come, my searching eyes, as in my dream,
Saw realms of peace, all golden, that had come in sleep so potent unto me;
I saw the world aglow with peace and light, and all on earth were free;
And militarism lay crushed, and Liberty was in the air,
Liberty, Democracy, and Faith in God were everywhere.

THE AMERICAN TRANSPORTS

A STARLESS night, with a fog at sea,
Marked time as their ships set forth;
And pictures of death and eternity
Seemed blent like wraiths on the froth.
In darkness and silence they stole away,
With no waving of flags, and no salutes,
With no farewell but the sea's dark spray
To bid Godspeed to those valiant troops.

In khaki suits they had marched on board,
In khaki suits, and bronzed by the sun;
My boy, and yours, midst all the horde,
Marched on the transports to fight the Hun.
They carried themselves with heads erect,
Whatever their thoughts that lonely hour,
Whatever the future might project,
Of weal or woe for them as dower.

Somewhere in France we hope and pray,
That God will have it for them to stand
Shoulder to shoulder while they essay
To shatter with Pershing the barb'rous breed
Whose murderous policy seeks to reek
Vengeance on all who'd oppose its creed;
Death to the innocent and the meek,
Destruction to all for German greed.

"WELL, LAFAYETTE, HERE WE ARE"

In these five words Gen. Pershing paid tribute at the tomb of Lafayette in Paris, July, 1917.

OH matchless speech! Oh words sublime!
Were those his soldier lips let fall,
To echo down the vales of time,
In answer to the suppliant call.
On bended knee, with head bowed low,
Before the tomb of Lafayette,
Brave Pershing spake that all might know
Columbia wills to pay her debt.

To France she feels in honor bound
By ties most holy and exalt;
Her richest heritage 'twill sound,
That now she pays without default.
A million men she freely gives,
And more if need be unto France,
In blood, in treasure, while she lives
To fire a gun or wield a lance.

While gratitude from shore to shore
Bespeaks the pride and joy of France.
We hearken back to days of yore,
When nations looked on us askance,
The news from Franklin over there,
That France would help us win the war,
Brought hope and comfort to us where
Dire disaster was sensed before.

So now with France we pledge our all,
Unstintingly to see it through,
What'er the cost, what'er befall,
Our utmost share we'll surely do.
As Pershing at the patriot's tomb,
In whisper low, said: "Here we are."
Columbia's guns soon, soon will boom,
Behold! she mounts her battle car.

IF WILHELM GOES

IF Wilhelm goes 'tis glad we all shall be,
And gladly spare him if he has to go;
For nought of love nor prayers have we
For Wilhelm, bitterest of foes.
His helmet spiked, and mailed fist we'll spare,
His prison camps, and poison gas as well;
And count it our good fortune rare,
If he be sent where none may tell.

His moustache curled, and flashing eye,
His coxcomb airs, and egotistic boast,
Of "me and God"—to rule supreme; the lie
That vauntingly he tells his German host.
His perjured tongue anent "defensive war
For Fatherland," and all that "kultur" stuff,
Of which the Hohenzollerns speak with awe,
We'll gladly spare—forsooth we've had enough.

If Wilhelm goes, and with him all his princeling crew,
We shall not weep, nor weeping, rage to have him go,
As he, for Constantine, whose crown went too,
But say "Amen, the kingdom cleaning's all too slow,"
When Belgium's loud lament makes him abhorred,
And Lusitania's wreck shows clear again,
We bow our heads and ask of Thee, oh Lord,
To brand his forehead with the curse of Cain.

FLAGS of the Allies, flung high in air,
As proudly they float in the breeze,
Is it a challenge or menace they bear,
While murmuring aloft there at ease?
Red, white, and blue, and tri-color too,
In unison now all are blended,
For liberty's cause, for me, and for you,
And for all that erstwhile we defended.

Flags of the Allies, for justice unfurled,
Emblazoned in freedom's cause, dear,
For freedom, for right, for an enslaved world,
Your admirers have nothing to fear
From autocrats base, and despots as well,
Who murder all things we love best,
Who'd vanquish the soul, consigning to hell,
The highest and noblest, the purest and best.

Flags of the Allies, this challenge they bear,
As entwined now they float in the blast;
That in human rights let all the world share,
That the rule of the people shall last.
The menace they bear, brings truce for all time,
A truce for all nations at war,
And good will to mankind in every clime,
Upheld by love, and maintained by law.

HELPING THE ENEMY

WE who stay at home in comfort while our boys are off to war,
We who worry lest the battles leave them maimed for evermore,
Are we doing ought but talking, saying "War is Hell,"
While of self we're always thinking, and of gain as well?

This is not a time for worry when there's real work to do,
When those boys are in the trenches, stalking death for you.
There are diff'rent kinds of slackers, and perhaps you're one,
Though you've past the age of muster, though you've sent your son.

Stop your idle talking 'bout the awful carnage wrought,
Do your "bit," while still rememb'ring talk is cheaply bought.
Pray forget the cares that fret you, 'mid the stress of war,
We have much to do, all mindful of what we're fighting for.

If you're at the store or workshop, counting room or farm,
Do your "bit" without the talking, then you can't do harm.
It may hap' the trouble maker may perchance a strike propose;
That's the time for you to protest, and with strength oppose.

It's the enemy we're helping while we're arguing at home,
While the boys are battl'ing bravely far beyond the foam.
They are doing yeoman service, let's do our "bit" as well,
For the glory of our native land, and tyranny's death knell.

THERE'S many a heart grown weary,
And many a heart grown sad;
There's many a heart grown lonesome,
That bleeds for a soldier lad.

You pity the forlorn mother,
Or the fond wife left behind;
The father who must smother
The grief he feels in kind.

But I think of her the lover,
Whose weight of woe's intense;
Whose grief she needs must cover,
While she broods o'er war's suspense.

For the world knows not her secret,
Of a marriage swiftly done;
Of a soldier kiss imprinted,
And vows that made them one.

But angels hover near her,
While to God she breathes a prayer,
That 'mid the shock of battle,
His precious life He'll spare.

VOICES FROM O'ER THE SEA

THERE are voices calling, calling to us, from across the surging sea;
"Now's the time to help us, brothers, win the fight for Liberty;
Faster, faster with your dollars, see the eagle soaring high,
For the honor of Old Glory, and for victory bye and bye.
We who've donned the khaki, with a firm, abiding faith
That you'll do your share with bonds to drive away Death's wraith.

Hark! we hear your welcome message, flashed to us across the sea,
'Comrades, there's no danger, once the Loan is floated fair, and free.
By the blood of Lusitania; by the ghosts that haunt the wave,
We'll be there with billions backing, for your gallant lives to save;
Take this badge and wear it proudly, that the Hun may see it there;
'Tis for Freedom you are fighting, and for right you nobly dare;
Rest assured though Teuton tyrants mock us with a coward sneer,
We'll subscribe in jig-time measure with the Bonds they well may fear.

We have bade goodbye to baseball, and have flung our golf sticks by;
Bade goodbye to tennis rackets, and on pleasures all are shy;
For we know there's something higher; something nobler to be done,
Since you've joined the colors, fighting for us with a gun.
So, to cheer you and to hold you with a grim, determined stride,
Take this message, too, 'twill serve you, and may fill your hearts with pride;
Bonds are piling faster, faster, till they now by billions count;
And we've scarce begun subscription, still amazed to see them mount.' "

GONE to the front, my boy, that's all,
Fresh from college, and crazy to go;
Ready if need be the first to fall,
To die, if Heaven should will it so.
He was so eager to do his part,
Eager and anxious to fall into line,
I smiled, though it nearly broke my heart
To see him in khaki, togged out so fine.

The day he left home, and marched away,
Shall I ever forget his fond embrace—
Or the look in his eyes, as if to say:
'Tis for you I go—and for the race?
I confess I'm proud of that boy of mine,
Proud of my son and his high resolve;
So ready to go, and so eager to shine,
Where the circles of war and death revolve.

Mother of Christ, oh, shield my boy,
Now that he's battling somewhere in France;
Battling with Pershing; my hope, my joy—
Somewhere he's taking a soldier's chance.
Where is he now? On the firing line
Perhaps; in the trenches—'tis all the same;
If alive, I can almost surely divine
How proud he feels to be in the game.

THERE'S suthin makes me feel unsartin,
When thinkin' o' this war,
And wonderin' how it all will end,
And what they're fightin' for,
'Bout those poor fellows in th' trenches,
Whose lives are ebbin' fast,
Whose trust is in th' Lord o' battles,
To "square" them at th' last.

'Course they won't reason why nor wherefore,
'Cause they must do and die;
And take their medicine like so'gers,
Nor ask th' reason why.
But somehow when th' shells are bustin',
And tearin' thro' th' air,
And killin' men as tho' they're cattle,
It somehow don't seem fair.

That they alone should be th' victims,
Or pawns o' this chess game,
That their lives should pay th' penalty,
Of glory, bought by shame.
I know they prate o' "love o' country,"
"Would die for fatherland,"
And talk o' freedom's battles,
And think they understand.

But all th' while they're food for car'yn,
'Mid th' avalanche o' war;
And I'm wond'ring if they're askin',
What's th' use, or what it's for;
Kingdoms hurled 'gainst one another,
At an emp'ror's command,
Civ'lization too turned backward,
An' starvation close t' hand

But soon or late I can't help thinkin',
As th' people realize,
That it's selfiishness they're fightin' for,
And that alone th' prize,
They'll protest and say to one another:
"What darned fools we've been!
Brothers, let's unite, t' save our 'bacon,'
From this carnival of sin.

"Let's unite, an' say unto our sov'rins,
Kings and Emp'rors as well,
Whose heads are swelled with lust o' battle,
An' hatred, born o' hell:
We're tired o' this unholy warfare,
An' this sacrifice o' life,
An' by the Lord, we're here t' end it,
Let's have peace, instid o' strife."

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

THIS is an age when spirits bold,
With vision calm, serene,
See heights aloft, whose summits fold
Marvels hid from gaze less keen.
Inventions that this world ne'er had
Are part of war's mad scheme;
And out of this world's melting pot
Is sprung th' inventor's dream.

The "Tank" which moves with snail-like pace
Along earth's battlefields,
And takes no note of guns or shells,
But deadly war doth wield;
Is but another of man's schemes
In vision mirrored clear,
That yet presages more and more
Of wonders shown us here.

The aeroplane which skeptics hailed
With sneers and jeering jibes,
No longer mocked, or e'en maligned,
A wonder is 'midst warring tribes.
The U-boat, too, though it's become
A thing of dread and hate
That's cursed today, tomorrow's sun
May deem it consecrate.

The 'mobile truck its mission serves
In wond'rous, devious ways;
And whether mending shoes or saving lives
In army circles pays.
For this we know, 'midst war's alarms,
That God reigns still above;
That He begets those dreams of man
To prove His wondrous love.

LIFE is full of worries, say you,
And its trials hard to bear;
Lots of thorns along your pathway,
Lots of troubles none may share.

And the future looks forbidding,
As the present seems unkind;
Little use in crossing bridges
'Til you reach them, bear in mind.

Journey onward, still aspiring,
All unmindful of your fate—
Failure should but whet ambition;
Travel onward, do not wait.

Cast no ling'ring glance behind you;
All your errors, sins, mishaps
Are but trials soon forgotten;
Strive again, but do not lapse.

Never mind when words are spoken
That the actions do not match;
Take them at their real value;
Forge ahead despite the scratch.

Let ambition be your watchword;
As your faith is strong you'll find,
Though the clouds may lower and threaten,
You'll succeed 'gainst all combined.

DOING HIS BEST

IT'S not enough for you to say,
"I've done the best I can";
For your best may be done in such a way
As to prove a sorry bit, my man,
Is your best OUR STANDARD, sir?
That's the question we ask today;
Is it efficient, without a blur?
If so, you have earned your pay.

It's the way that you worked today,
Will tell us who your are;
Whether you loafed your time away,
Or dreamily followed a star;
Whether you grasped the task in hand,
With firm endeavor to see it through,
And whether you thoroughly understand
Just what it meant to you.

Whether you thought it only a bluff
That required no thought or style;
Whether you laughed at the sort of stuff
That your boss passed out the while.
Did you try to evade your job?
Then you'll never amount to much;
Whatever you think of Charlie Schwab,
Of Andrew Carnegie, and all such.

Today did you trust to luck?
Were you heedless, too, as well?
Or did you supply the essential pluck
That was needed of you to tell?
Were your thoughts on the clock, today?
Were you careless about your job?
Seeking always the easiest way
And shirking your work like a "slob."

Success is a siren who leads you on,
From lowly plain to lofty height;
If you do your part, nor pause anon,
To toy with luck, nor cease to fight.
Our standard's America's best, today;
However your chums may view it,
You'll find at the last 'twill surely pay,
And confess "that's all there's to it."

PRAY you search for good in people,
'Stead of lighting on their faults;
'Stead of seeing evil lurking,
Find the good that somehow halts.
When you hear a tale of scandal
'Bout someone with sin beset,
'Stead of prating of the rumor,
Strive your utmost to forget.

Think how he was sorely tempted,
Or a weaker will than yours
Might have made of him the victim
Whom temptation quickly lures.
Lend a hand to lift the fallen,
'Stead of asking how he fell;
Time enough to learn the reason
When you know that all is well.

When you see a fellow worker
Get a blow that's hard to bear,
'Stead of talking 'nent his trouble,
Pitch right in, and help to share.
Speak a word of courage to him;
Try to comfort him as well;
Mercy is for all God's children,
Evil only's born of Hell.

Search for good, and oh, remember!
You, yourself may have some vice
That perchance you are concealing
From the world with manner nice;
Camouflaged, it still is lurking,
Eager for the light to flash;
When perhaps you feel the safest,
It may out and homeward dash.

"NIGHT THOUGHTS"

I STOOD at night on the city street,
Harkening to sounds of hurrying feet;
To shouts of merriment and whispers faint;
To the fool's loud jest and to wisdom's plaint;
To the laughter of youth and the sneer of age;
The joy of the rich and poverty's rage;
To the beggar who brushed me, hobbling by,
With his pleading for pity, charity.

And I mused while there in solemn thought;
God in Heaven, tell me why
So much wealth and poverty;
So much joy and so much pain;
So much misery and shame,
Must there be on earth forever wrought?

How is it that on the city street
Vanity and modesty forever meet?
Luxury and penury,
Happiness and misery,
Solemnly in masquerade,
Shadow forms on parade.

God of mercy, to our shame,
Must it ever be the same?
Saintliness and usury,
Hypocrites and Pharisee.
God of justice, pray look down;
See this bustling, busy town;
See the churches, stately risen,
In Thy Name, from earth towards Heaven.
Hear their congregations' hymns,
Sung to Thee like Seraphims.

Read their hearts and see there fraught
Naught which Christ the Redeemer taught;
See their maddening lust for wealth,
Fraught with covetous and venal stealth.
There with sorrow, grief and tribulation
See proud arrogance and inculpation.

Note their Pharisaic air;
See their hypocritic stare;
Hear the preacher's loud lament
From the selfsame testament
That hath been for centuries used
To cure the world by vice abused.

WHEN I'm feelin' kind o' restless like,
And feelin' kind o' blue;
When all the world seems cheerless,
And friends seem scarce and few;
I just tackle any trifle, such
As this which comes to mind,
And in writin' random poetry,
The world feels sort o' kind.

For a friendly kind o' feelin' comes
Like sunshine through a cloud;
Or as tho' I saw a rainbow,
Where before I saw a shroud;
And then I know there's nothin' mournful,
But as thinkin' makes it so,
And this feelin' that I'm restless like
Is thinkin' like, I know.

For believin' that in Heaven, Love
Is rulin' things below;
That the God who marks the sparrow's fall
Can as easily lighten woe;
Kind o' makes me think I'm foolish like,
And sort o' thankless, too,
To be feelin' grouchy 'cause the world
Is happy while I'm blue.

'Tis in thinkin' less o' selfish things,
And havin' gen'rous thoughts
And liftin' one another's burdens,
That happiness is bought;
For philosophy seems simple like,
And easy, too, to mind,
If at first we strive to learn the art
Of simply being kind.

So I'm restin' kind o' easy like,
While writin' down these lines;
And I'm thinkin' pleasant thoughts the while
Of fellows in the mines,
Who seldom see th' sun a-shinin',
But toil th' livelong day;
Yet still are happy while they're minin'
An gettin' just a ray.

"THE MAN WORTH WHILE"

THE man worth while is the honest man;
Honest in thought, in deed, in plan;
Who speaks the truth where a lie would serve;
Who scorns the false; who has real nerve;
Who will fight for a friend and walk a mile
To serve him, if need be, once in awhile;
Who measures his conduct from day to day
With an eye to perfection rather than pay;
Who knows not deceit nor hypocrisy's guile;
Who is eager to serve the world and smile;
Who is simple and frank and plain as well;
Who abhors a sham and is quick to tell
The fradulent, canting, treacherous wight
From the open, ingenuous, trusty knight;
Whose word is his bond, whenever given,
As good, in fact, as though writ in Heaven;
Who sees the whole truth in poetry writ;
Whose lifework, indeed, is governed by it.
That "our acts are our angels, or good, or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."
Who is "first in war"; the same in peace;
Who's a power for right till wrong shall cease;
Who in face of calumny still can smile,
And be generous, too,—that's the man worth while.

WHERE DO YOU FIT?

SAY, what is your place in the world today?
Have you figured it out just where you fit?
Have you looked at yourself, or turned away
With the thought that others will think you're "It"?
Are your acts sincere, or simply a bluff?
In the world of trade, is your word a law?
Is your conduct deemed but opera bouffe?
Is it camouflaged over with lots of "jaw"?

Have you stopped to reason about your work?
Have you striven your best to win respect?
Are you one of the army who always shirk
While others push on who're more circumspect?
Are you honest in all you say and do?
Or a smooth-tongued hypocrite sooth to say?
Do you think that the world does not see through
The sham and pretense in the light of today?

Think well of your place in the world of men,
And examine your deeds with thoughts sincere;
Your dealings must square with conscience, then
Be sure, my friend, you'll have nothing to fear.
On the sea of life you must steer your bark
Alone, and unaided, through dang'rous shoals;
To the voice of conscience always hark,
If ever you hope to attain great goals.

"WATCH YOUR STEP"

AS you journey through life you'll find that it pays
Whatever your station, whatever one says,
To be always alert, and to watch well your step
Up the ladder Success, to which few are adept.
Don't rush at your task, but consider it well;
Then smooth out the wrinkles that failure would spell,
Remembering the adage first spoken with dread:
Only "fools rush in where no angels would tread."

It may happen temptation will "dog" all your way,
Making light of ambition and clouding each day;
Then your conscience must be the one perfect guide,
And mentor as well, or you'll drift with the tide.
It will happen your friend of a day may see fit
To chasten your ardor with some form of wit;
Put a check to ambition, and hamper each step;
Then summon your will power and show him your "pep."

There are others you'll find with ambition as keen
As your own, and whose honor and conscience are clean.
Make friends of that kind; they will help you endure
The taunts of the others whose malice is sure.
But remember it well; keep this motto in mind:
Watch your step, my good friend, or you'll fall far behind;
For each round of the ladder must be firm and true;
Fraught with patience and nerve and with energy, too.

Then when you're on top, pray you, pause to look down
On the multitude clam'ring in cap, hood and gown.
Lend a helping hand then, or a soft, kindly word;
'Twill inspire some poor fellow whose milk has grown curd;
Or whose burdens seem heavy; whose heart is bowed down
With misfortune's caress and the world's careless frown.
He'll have courage to strive more than ever the while
In the strength of your precept—the light of your smile.

"IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN"

AS I sit here and ponder over life's plan,
of the things that are, and might have been;
Of the years that have gone to make life's span,
And the dreams I've had, and the visions I've seen,
I am wondering if ever I may succeed,
Or why there was ever the slightest need
For me to struggle amid life's thrall,
Or why, indeed, I was born at all.

When I think of my youth, and ambition's goal,
Ere temptation had come to sear my soul;
When all nature seemed a coleur-de-rose,
And action far better than sweet repose,
My vision, too, was crystal clear,
Unclouded by a single fear;
My thoughts were of conquest, from day to day,
And how to succeed by the surest way.

Opportunity came on the wings of fate
And beckoned to me to open the gate.
It had honors, too, for the favored few,
And gold galore to distribute, too.
With incense and myrrh it was loaded down,
As it signaled to me from over the town;
It beckoned but once; then flew away,
For the gate was barred—I can see today.

Do you ask me why and wherefore then?
I can only answer, "It might have been."
And ever this thought comes home to me.
As time goes on I can plainly see,
If I would partake of fortune's meed,
And share in the honors I most do need;
I must put Temptation behind me quite
And be ever alert and prepared to fight.

If I the honors of life would win,
And not prate forever, "It might have been";
Remember well and learn it by heart
Always to play a man's full part;
To play it well, with a vision clear
That will mirror the future, year by year;
Nor let opportunity once escape,
When it comes weighted on the wings of Fate.

IN MEMORIAM

LO, Death hath found another shining mark,
A genius 'mid the world's broad field of strife;
A pilot who had safely steered his bark
O'er seas tempestuous in this life.
Here, where he fell, a tender memory springs,
More potent far than all the magic of renown,
Or all the wonder that his name now brings,
Or all the mystery that may come to crown
His life in death, make glorious his name.
The memory of his deeds has power to still
Whate'er of malice might besmirch his fame,
Or envy might invent, with strength to chill
The soul's warm currents when let loose
In words of praise to loftier spirit dealt.
Enough the epitaph we find to choose,
"He strove for worthy ends"—e'en so he felt.

I SOMETIMES think of those drifting ones,
Who're ambling this life through,
With never a thought but the commonplace,
And never a thing to do;
Whose to-day is the same as their yesterday
As barren and worthless quite,
Whose tomorrow is driftwood over again,
Who're drifting by day and night.

In the walks of life they're satisfied
With this animal life they lead,
And nobler aims is to them all "rot,"
For selfishness is their creed.
To eat and drink and be fashion's slave,
Is all their life summed up,
To the devil with honor, virtue and fame,
And the devil fills up their cup.

The drifters you'll find on every hand,
Who'll talk with complacent air,
Of the war or crops and of things galore,
For which they have never a care;
For attainment is something they know not of,
And ambition is most absurd,
Content with their lot if they're left alone,
To drift with the aimless herd.

There are others who drift, with aims the same,
Though their lives run far apart,
The "lower seven," like the "upper ten,"
Who never had a start;
Without a friend on earth's broad way,
As in rags they drift about,
Begging from all, where'er they can,
Each lives and dies a "lout."

A Boston Vision

I'D scaled the height of the Custom House,
Nor paused withal 'til I'd reached the tower;
Below me the city lay bathed in light,
And I recked not the day nor the hour.
I was awed, amazed, and my senses thrilled,
And strange visions then entered my soul;
Imagination had power o'er me,
And weird phantasy was in control.

I gazed aloft; the ethereal blue,
Canopied all with its velvet shade;
Dipped in the harbor its circlet soft
And made of the "Hub" a jeweled jade.
I marveled then, as I gazed athwart
The metropolis, teeming with life,
And saw the prodigies man had wrought
From out nature, by endless strife.

I saw the State House dome of burnished gold,
Perched like an idol on Beacon Hill;
The Ames Building—a giant in height—
Towering aloft, transcendant still;
Saw Bunker Hill, with its peerless shaft,
Where "once the embattled farmers" fought
'Gainst fearful odds, in Freedom's name,
And Freedom's cause so dearly bought.

Then I looked to where the ferries passed;
Saw warships painted gray against the sky;
Saw tugs and barges plying noiselessly,
And merchant ships as silently go by.

While here and there new wonders came to light
From out the circling gloom and drifting smoke;
I saw the Blue Hills stretching like a web
Far to the South, where earth with heaven broke.

I saw Wachusett Mountain, 'mid the mist,
Glowing with glorious summer bloom,
And towering nobly, mantled green
By nature's everlasting, fertile loom.
My gaze swept onward, by village, hamlet, farm,
To where Fair Harvard nestled all serene
In somber stillness and majesty profound,
A fitting monument to knowledge keen.

Passed by the green where "village smithy" stands,
And by the bridge whereon the poet turned,
Enwrapped; the old North Church and Faneuil Hall
At once revealed, in sunlit realms discerned.
I saw the city rising, all sublime,
A wondrous vision flung athwart my sight
Of golden radiance, splendid mystery,
In circles beautiful, bathed in light.

I saw, beneath the sky's triumphal arch,
Ten thousand flags all fluttering aloft,
Proclaiming manhood's step toward Freedom,
And leavening all with leaven soft.
Freedom! I cried. And then my soul took wing;
'Tis Boston consecrate at Freedom's shrine,
Where Freedom's temple first was reared;
'Tis Liberty's cradle, always and everlasting.

IF I were twenty-one again,
What think you I would do?
I'd strive until I should attain
The laws of faith all true;
And truth and love and right secure,
With confidence sure crowned,
And hope to glimmer always pure
Along my pathway crowned.

If I were twenty-one again,
Conviction would be clear
As sunlight shining o'er the main,
Or maiden's conscience dear.
I'd crowd at least one kindly act
In every single day;
For kindness is the world's best fact,
Life's carpet all the way.

If I were twenty-one again,
The friend I'd count secure,
In weather fair as in the rain,
Should be true friend and sure.
I'd "girdle him with hooks of steel"
Around my own fond heart.
And nought that malice could reveal,
Should e'er that friendship part.

If I were twenty-one again,
I'd firmly make this vow,
That faith with honor I'd maintain,
Though vice should smile as now.
Temptation I would put aside,
Whate'er its guise might be,
And walk the thorny path betide,
Content if right abide with me.

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